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Mr. B. Venkataratnam repeated his question which was translated by the Secretary to Council thus :

" As regards the headquarters of the West Godavari district, did Government issue a Government Order fixing Nidadavole as headquarters ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :— " No, Sir."

Mr. P. C. VENKATAPATI RAJU :— " Will the hon. the Revenue Member be pleased to say whether any proceedings have been issued stating that Nidadavole should be the headquarters or was the place in view of the Government as to the headquarters of the district at the time of the bifurcation of the district ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :— " My recollection is clear that Government did not commit itself to any particular place."

Famine

Famine conditions in upland taluks of Guntur district.

* 224 Q.—Mr. P. ANJANEYULU : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that there is famine in the upland taluks of Guntur district and in several other districts in this Presidency ;

(b) whether the Government propose to start famine-relief works in any, and if so in what districts ; and

(c) whether the Government will be pleased to state the amount of famine insurance fund available at present ?

A.—(a) If by ' Famine ' the hon. Member means starvation, the Government have no reason to suppose that any such conditions prevail in any part of the Presidency.

(b) In view of the answer to clause (a) above, the Government do not propose to start at present relief works in accordance with the provisions of the Famine Code but steps have been taken in those areas of the Presidency in which it has been found necessary to do so to expand ordinary works programmes, to make grants to local boards for the execution of village and other works, and to grant loans freely under the Loans Acts.

(c) The amount at the credit of the fund will be Rs. 30,56,856 on 1st April 1927.

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :— " With reference to answer to (a), may I ask whether famine is defined as starvation ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :— " I do not know ; but in common English famine does mean starvation."

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :— " I want to know whether famine conditions do not prevail in certain districts of the Presidency, especially Bellary ? I want to know also what are the conditions laid down before an area is declared to be famine-stricken ? "

The hon. the PRESIDENT :— " Order, order. The hon. Member will see that the question refers to Guntur and he cannot raise any supplementary question regarding Bellary."

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Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—“ Question (a) says ‘and in several other districts in this Presidency,’ and I put my question under that clause.”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ Unfortunately we are bound by the rules. Rule 9 refers to supplementary questions dealing with matters of fact that are referred to in the answer and not in the question.”

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—“ I refer to the answer to (a) and ask whether famine conditions as defined in the Famine Code prevail in any part of the Presidency, and particularly in the Bellary district, whether those usual tests that are applied to a place before it is declared famine-stricken have been applied, especially in the case of Bellary ? ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ The hon. Member may proceed with his supplemental question.”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ The first question is answered by the answer on paper. The second question is whether the test conditions have been satisfied and the answer to that is in the negative.”

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—“ Is it not a fact that a large number of the labourers in the Bellary district have been migrating to other parts of the country for want of employment in their own district ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ The Government have no information to that effect.”

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—“ Is it not a fact that the district board has started some works which may be deemed as test works which have been protecting a large number of labourers in spite of the very much reduced wages ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ The Government have given the district boards grants for carrying on certain works in order to give employment to labourers under ordinary conditions but not under the test conditions of the Famine Code.”

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—“ Do not they satisfy the tests laid down in the Famine Code ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ No, Sir.”

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—“ May I know whether famine conditions do not prevail in the Ongole taluk of the Guntur district ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ The answer is in clause (a).”

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—“ In the ordinary sense in which the word famine is understood, I ask whether famine conditions do not prevail where both the crops have failed, where both the monsoons have failed and water scarcity, fodder scarcity and other conditions prevail. I ask whether such conditions do not prevail in the Ongole taluk ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ The conditions specified by the hon. Member do prevail and I have said so to a previous question.”

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—“ If so, what steps have been taken to give such relief as is available to Government to the poor and almost starved ryots of the Ongole taluk ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ Sir, that question has been put and fully answered in another connexion. If the hon. Member wants a detailed statement from me I must ask him to give notice.”

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Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—"As regards answer to clause (b), in view of the answer to clause (a) I should like to know whether Government will start any relief works as understood in the Famine Code. No details need be given at present as the hon. Member said."

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—"Government have given grants to local boards to start local works which will give employment to the people. That is in the Ongole taluk. As regards the other parts, they are pushing on with the railway lines which afford employment to many people."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—"As far as the railway line from Ongole to Kottapatnam is concerned, to the best of my information, it is a small line of ten miles or so, at a cost of Rs. 80,000."

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—"I shall look into the matter, Sir."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—"May I ask the hon. Member what he means by 'starvation', whether it is hopeless underfeeding or starvation out of existence from the world?"

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—"I admit there are certain classes of people who do not have enough."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—"Has the Government become aware of the existence of such starvation as would lead to death or anything somewhere near that?"

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—"The conditions are laid down in the Famine Code to which I must refer the hon. Member."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—"I know something of the Famine Code. If people turn up for work for $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas or two annas, that I suppose is one of the tests of the Famine Code about the existence of starvation or whatever it is. I do not fight for words. Unless relief works are started I want to know how Government is in a position to know whether famine exists or not."

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—"Certain precedent conditions are laid down in the Famine Code. The hon. Member may refer to them. The Famine Code lays down the conditions on which we shall proceed with test works."

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—"The hon. the Revenue Member seems to have said that famine conditions prevail in certain districts of the Presidency. Now, Sir, I wish to ask what prevents him from declaring those areas famine-stricken and applying all the rules of famine relief provided in the Code?"

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—"I do not admit the premises; therefore I do not accept the conclusion."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—"I desire to know from the hon. the Revenue Member whether he considers that there are not groups of villages in the districts of Bellary and Anantapur that would satisfy the extremist conditions of scarcity enunciated in the Famine Code?"

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The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I cannot profess to a personal knowledge of such groups of villages. I can only act on the information I have got and it is not to that effect.”

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ Would the hon. the Revenue Member call for reports on the economic conditions of the villages of Markapur, Pattikonda and other taluks which I have mentioned in my amendment to the Resolution regarding famine in the Bellary district and in the whole of the Anantapur district ? I really ask whether the hon. Member is prepared to call for reports from the Collectors whether there are not in the districts specified groups of villages which satisfy the hardest conditions of scarcity according to the Famine Code.”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ We do call for periodical reports and when we are satisfied that conditions in particular parts may worsen we get monthly reports. I am not quite sure to what particular matter the hon. Member wants the Collector’s attention to be drawn. The economic condition of the villages in many parts of the Presidency, we all know, is very unsatisfactory even in the best of seasons. I do not know whether the hon. Member means to suggest that famine conditions generally prevail in particular villages.” 11-30
a.m.

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ In view of the admission that the hon. the Revenue Member has made that even in the best of seasons the condition of certain villages is generally bad . . . ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ In parts, Sir.”

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ I do certainly feel that I would be right in asking him to draw the attention of the Collectors definitely to that fact and ask them to send up reports in regard to the particular villages which are considered to be worse affected in their jurisdiction. I was asking this question whether he was prepared to ask for reports from the Collectors in these specific terms.”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I am quite prepared to draw the attention of the Collectors to what the hon. Member has said.”

Mr. P. BHAKTAVATSULU NAYEDU :—“ The answer seems to suggest that famine relief can only be started when there is a condition of starvation. Is that the test for starting famine relief works ? Or, may I know the meaning of famine from the hon. the Revenue Member ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I must refer the hon. Member to the Famine Code.”

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—“ May I know whether normal wages were paid when they started work in the Bellary district ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ Notice, Sir.”

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—“ May I know the normal wages in those parts ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ Notice, Sir.”

Mr. L. K. TULASIRAM :—“ Will the hon. the Revenue Member be pleased to state whether in the areas occupied by the handloom weavers, viz., Aruppukottai, Paramakudi, Dindigul and Salem there has been an abnormal increase of indigenous beggars ; whether there has been migration of weavers

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to other places and whether all the weavers have been changing their profession of handloom weaving to do harvesting work for one and a half annas per day ? ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ Does the question arise out of famine ? ”

Mr. L. K. TULASIRAM :—“ Famine conditions in the areas occupied by handloom weavers.”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ We have received no report to that effect.”

Mr. L. K. TULASIRAM :—“ Will the hon. the Revenue Member be pleased to ask the Collectors of those districts where there is a large population of handloom weavers to report on the famine conditions affecting those weavers ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ What the hon. Member says will be communicated to the Collector and his attention drawn to it.”

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ Is the hon. the Revenue Member aware of the fact that the reports in the *Fort St. George Gazette* published within the last eight or ten weeks make it plain that in the Ceded districts especially in Kurnool and in parts of Bellary and Anantapur the rates at which the staple grains sell have reached beyond the warning rates according to the Famine Code ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ The Famine Code lays down no warning rates.”

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—“ May I ask the hon. the Revenue Member whether Collectors are asked to report about any sudden increase in emigration in their areas ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ Yes, Sir.”

Mr. P. SIVA RAO :—“ May I know what are the tests that are applied before declaring an area as famine-stricken ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I do not think that I can enumerate them from memory. They are all laid down in the Famine Code.”

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—“ Will the hon. the Revenue Member be pleased to consider the question of raising the wages proportionately to the rise in prices of food-grains ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I do not follow the question. Will the hon. Member please repeat it ? ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ The hon. Member will kindly repeat his question.”

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—“ Will the Government consider the question of asking the local boards to raise the wages of labourers when there is a rise in the price of food-grains ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ It is not in my charge.”

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—“ Has the Collector of Salem reported about the abnormal increase in emigration from the Atur taluk in the Salem district ? ”

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The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I should like to have notice of the question.”

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—“ Will he be kind enough to ask the Collector to report on this matter ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ That is one of the points on which his report will contain information.”

Mr. A. KALESWARA RAO :—“ May I know if the Government have settled a scheme of famine relief works for the whole of famine-affected areas in the Presidency and will they be pleased to place it on the table of the House. Instead of referring the labourers to the railway companies or to get the help of local boards, has the Government themselves settled any scheme to be undertaken by them directly and may I know further whether the hon. Member will be pleased to lay it on the table ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ There is for every district a list or programme of works to be adopted in the event of famine works being started.”

Mr. A. KALESWARA RAO :—“ Has it not yet been settled ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ In every district there is a programme of works maintained even in normal seasons to be put through in the event of famine relief being started.”

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ It is not a question of programme of work. May I know what specifically, out of those programmes of work has been taken up? If the hon. Member will be kind enough to get that information from the districts and publish it, I feel that the members of this House would be in a better position to tell the sufferers where they can find employment.”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ I do not follow the hon. Member. In answer to a previous question it was made quite clear that the Government have not opened relief works.”

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—“ I was asking a question with reference to the answer the hon. the Revenue Member gave to the Member for Kistna. I really wanted to know whether out of the programme of work for every district any definite work has been taken in hand in any district and if so whether the hon. Member was prepared to get reports of such definite works taken up for this year and publish them for the information of the House ? ”

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS :—“ As I have said already the Government have not opened any relief work. When the time comes they will do so.”

Free grazing of cattle in forest reserves of famine-stricken districts.

* 225 Q.—Mr. P. ANJANEYULU : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether there is any representation from famine-stricken districts to throw open certain forest reserves for grazing cattle free during this period of distress ; and

(b) whether Government have passed any and what orders thereon ?